GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:612
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2005
FOOD SECURITY
Pandey Dr. Laxminarayan

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of a report released by Food and Agriculture Orgainsation (FAO) on the worsening food security conditions in the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the report has stated that the number of people in the country without adequate food supply has increased since 1996-97;

(d) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether such a condition prevails despite sufficient stocks of foodgrains in the country; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 612 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 09.05.2005 IN THE LOK SABHA

(a): & (b): The FAO`s report entitled `State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2004` indicates that the `reference period` determines as to whether the food security situation in the world is worsening. It states that for the developing world, the number of undernourished declined between the trienniums 1990-1992 and 2000-2002 (824 million to 815 million). However, the number increased between 1995-97 and 2000-2002 (797 million to 815 million). In other words, the data show a marked decline in the number between the early nineties and the mid nineties, and a sharp increase from the mid nineties to the period 2000-02. The proportion of the population that was undernourished declined slightly in both sub-periods, from 20% in 1990-92 to 18% in 1995-97 to 17% in 2000-02. In most of the world`s major regions, the number and proportion of the undernourished declined over both sub-periods, with 2 major exceptions; South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. In these regions, while the percentage undernourished did decline in both sub-periods, the number of undernourished increased.

(c) & (d): For India, the report shows a decline in the number of undernourished from 216 million to 203 million between 1990-92 and 1995-97, followed by an increase to 221 million by 2000-02. The percentage undernourished declined from 25% of the population to 21% between 1990-92 and than remained unchanged till 2000-02.

(e) & (f): FAO has intimated that they are still in the process of studying the reasons for the change in the number of undernourished and would not care to speculate on the possible causes prior to completion of the review, being undertaken by them. The country had sufficient foodgrains stocks in 2000-02 as is evidenced by the fact that no imports were necessitated in this period and there was relative price stability.